

Committee Report 2010/2011

Welcome to the 9th AGM of Chester DFAS

Once again I can report on a busy and successful year of lectures and events. Our Society continues to thrive, with 248 members and 68 on the waiting list. This year we were able to offer membership to over 20 from the waiting list, and observe how enthusiastically new members are welcomed into our friendly society.

We do value those on our waiting list and offer “open” events, including for example the evening lecture on [The Scottish Colourists](#), so they can come along and feel part of the Society.

The committee are aware that our venue’s fire regulations limit attendance and we are seeking the best solution to enable the society to expand in the future.

During the year our exiting lecture programme included a fascinating look at “Fakes and Forgeries”, a tour of “The New Berlin”, and a dramatic examination of Contemporary Stained Glass whilst our Christmas lecture featured the artists, musicians, designers and dancers linked to Diaghilev and *The Ballet Russes*. This lecture even featured music and the moving image and was planned to co-inside with the exhibition at the V&A.

As an extra event this year we held a successful evening of music with Peter Medhurst in the elegant surroundings of the Long Room at Eaton Hall.

On a sunny June day 46 people visited [Lichfield](#) for a guided tour of this small city, with time to visit the Cathedral, the homes of Samuel Johnson and Erasmus Darwin, and the Heritage Centre. After lunch we travelled to Shugborough, the home of the Anson family and featuring exquisite ceramics, furniture and paintings.

In October, Marian organized a guided tour of Manchester’s gothic [John Rylands Library](#) examining priceless books and artifacts. In the afternoon we walked to the People’s Museum, an iconic new building to learn about the social and political history of the city and to see conservation work in progress. Needless to say on both visits, time was found for afternoon tea.

In September, Mary led our four day visit to [Krakow](#), exploring the art, architecture and history of this unique city. We toured the Cloth Hall with its Renaissance features, the cathedral, coronation site of Polish monarchs, and the Royal Castle, with the 16th century Flemish tapestries. We even managed a tour of the salt mines exploring the religious statues, alters and even chandeliers all carved from salt. And who will forget the tour of the 630 year old University Buildings?

Margaret arranged two successful Study Days, beginning with Shirley Turner’s day of [The Golden Age of Holland](#), featuring artists such as Rembrandt, Hals, Vermeer and de Hooch.

February’s Study day explored [Mexican Art](#) from before the Spanish conquest of 1519, up to the present day. Our lecturer was Chloe Sayer who showed us exciting examples of rich embroideries, shimmering beadwork and jewelry in silver and gold.

Chester DFAS continues to be committed to volunteer issues, made possible by the sale of raffle tickets. Marie our [Young Arts](#) Co-ordinator reports that the Society made a donation to the School Arts competition marking the 50th anniversary of Chester Civic Trust, and was presented with an original etching by the artist Andy Leigh. Then we joined the Chester Renaissance's [Rhino Mania](#), by sponsoring two glass fibre rhinos in a local school.

Chester DFAS, together with a grant from the Nadfas Patricia Fay Fund, as also funded the creation of a Young Arts Nadfas Group at Neston High School, created by Chris Davies, the North West area Young Arts co-ordinator. Fifteen Year Nine students are exploring a range of media and techniques – “a wonderful atmosphere in the studio – a real buzz”. An exhibition is promised in summer 2011, which we hope to share with our members.

Our [Heritage Volunteers](#) continue to work regularly at the Chester Records Office on various projects, including the re-packaging of a large collection of historic wills. Meanwhile our talented team of sewers led by Margaret have now completed over 100 protective costume covers for the Grosvenor Museum's costume collection.

In conjunction with Chester Civic Trust, Kath reports that our Heritage Volunteers stewarded at the 2000 Years of Chester exhibition. During the [Heritage Open Days](#) in September they also stewarded here, at St. Mary's Centre and held a detailed exhibition of Heritage Volunteer's projects past and present. On the same weekend the [Cathedral Kneeler Catalogues](#) prepared by our Volunteers were also on public display in the Cathedral library.

None of these events would be possible without the hard work of the committee and other regular helpers, for example our three dedicated projectionists – Elizabeth, John and Basil. Our Fine Lines newsletter is put together by Jan whilst Cilla looks after our website. We also have a small group of “regulars” we can call on to help out on occasions. Perhaps some of you would like to become more actively involved with the Society? If so we would love to hear from you.

I am sure you will agree that we have a dedicated committee, fully deserving of our thanks. Sadly it is time to say goodbye to Trish, our ever vigilant Treasurer, to Margaret who has organized our Study Days to Mavis who ensures all runs smoothly at our venue, to Marion and Mary for arranging our enjoyable visits, and to Marie our enthusiastic Young Arts co-ordinator.

So at the end of this year we can look forward to further interesting and informative lectures and events in our friendly, vibrant Society.

Best Regards,

Dorothy